Ryze and Lies: The Much Hyped Mushroom Coffee Is Just That: Hype

Beware in the days of RFK Jr. the products that claim they are healthy are just like him — not measuring up.

By Josh Powell | July 15, 2025

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For many of us, be those who work online like me, or those who recreate here, you've seen the ads for Ryze Coffee and their products. Now I see a lot online and take most ads with a grain of sand, but there are some that do get my attention. To really register it takes one of two things — repetition or an endorsement of someone I know or like. It is rare that it is both, but here you have it, the doubleheader: I see ads for Ryze Coffee all the time and it was being hawked by Neil Patrick Harris. Look if Dr. Doogie is pushing it…

Well, I am not new to mushroom coffee. I've tried it both as a coffee alternative and yes, as a health supplement. I have Parkinson's Disease and it was said to help with the tremors. I'll get into all of this, but for me let me start with it was not as good as coffee and I still take my Carbidopa.

It is ironic really, Ryze did not claim to help with my PD. I learned that Lion's Mane mushrooms and their products in theory can help. Why? Lion's Mane mushrooms contain several bioactive compounds that theoretically could help with Parkinson's disease through multiple mechanisms. The compounds include hericenones and erinacines, which can cross the blood-brain barrier and stimulate the production of nerve growth factor. This promotes the growth, maintenance, and survival of neurons — potentially helping protect the dopaminergic neurons that are damaged in Parkinson's disease.

The mushroom's compounds may also help protect existing neurons from further damage while potentially promoting the regeneration of neural pathways. This is particularly relevant for Parkinson's, where progressive loss of dopamine-producing neurons in the substantia nigra causes motor symptoms. Additionally, chronic

neuroinflammation plays a role in Parkinson's progression, and Lion's Mane has demonstrated anti-inflammatory properties that could potentially slow this inflammatory cascade in the brain. The antioxidant activity also contributes, as oxidative stress damages neurons in Parkinson's disease.

But it didn't do much — for me. This was a while ago and what I have found that works is my doctor prescribing medications and lots of exercise, sleep and healthy foods. Go figure.

But what I did not know were all the other things Ryze's products can do. So let's take a look at some of their claims, shall we?

The Energy Promise That Actually Makes Sense

"All day energy and no shakes or anxiety." Well sign me up. And it is true it does give you energy — just like coffee! Because it is coffee!

Here's what's actually happening when you drink Ryze. The primary energy boost comes from caffeine, though most mushroom coffee blends typically contain less caffeine than regular coffee — usually around 48mg per cup compared to 95mg in regular coffee. But there's more to the story than just caffeine content.

Ryze includes several functional mushrooms that may contribute to energy in different ways. Cordyceps is most directly linked to energy enhancement, potentially improving oxygen utilization and ATP production at the cellular level, which could support physical endurance and reduce fatigue. Lion's Mane, while primarily known for cognitive benefits, can create a sense of sustained mental energy through better mental clarity and focus. Even Reishi, though typically considered calming, may support energy by improving sleep quality and reducing stress-related fatigue over time. Chaga contains antioxidants that may support overall cellular health and potentially reduce fatigue.

Many users report that mushroom coffee provides a more sustained, less jittery energy compared to regular coffee. This could be due to the lower caffeine content reducing crashes, the adaptogenic properties of mushrooms potentially modulating stress response, and compounds that may smooth out caffeine's effects.

But here's the reality check: while the mushroom components have some research support, the immediate energy you feel from Ryze is primarily from caffeine. The mushroom benefits tend to be more subtle and may build up over time with consistent use rather than providing an instant energy boost.

And here's something crucial that most people don't realize: there's often a massive gap between the amounts of mushroom extracts used in studies and what you actually get in your cup of Ryze. Studies showing Cordyceps benefits typically use 1,000–3,000mg of extract daily, while a typical serving of mushroom coffee might contain only 50–250mg of Cordyceps extract. That's potentially 10–60 times less than the research doses. It's like expecting the benefits of a full multivitamin when you're getting a fraction of the active ingredients.

Weight Loss Claims That Raised My Eyebrows

When I started seeing claims about losing "a lot of weight in weeks" from Ryze, I had to dig deeper. These are highly exaggerated marketing claims that don't align with scientific reality.

Ryze might theoretically support weight management through modest mechanisms at best. The caffeine effects could provide a slight metabolism boost — maybe 3–5% increase — and some appetite suppression. Cordyceps shows promise in some animal studies for supporting fat metabolism, but human evidence is weak. Reishi may help with stress-related eating by supporting better sleep and stress management. And if you're replacing a high-calorie breakfast with low-calorie mushroom coffee, that could create a caloric deficit.

But here's why "weeks" claims are unrealistic: sustainable fat loss is typically 1–2 pounds per week maximum. Any dramatic short-term weight loss is usually water weight. No single food or drink can cause rapid fat loss without a caloric deficit, and the mushroom compounds aren't present in high enough concentrations in coffee blends to have dramatic effects.

What people might actually experience is slightly reduced appetite from caffeine, better energy leading to more activity, less stress eating if the adaptogens help with stress, water weight fluctuations, and quite honestly, the placebo effect from believing the product works.

Companies making “lose lots of weight fast” claims are using classic supplement marketing tactics. The FDA doesn’t regulate these claims strictly, and they often rely on customer testimonials rather than controlled studies. Anyone promising rapid weight loss from a single product should raise red flags.

The Sexual Health Angle Nobody Talks About

Ryze and other mushroom coffee brands sometimes make claims about sexual health benefits, but the evidence is limited and mostly theoretical.

Cordyceps is the mushroom most associated with sexual health benefits, with some small studies suggesting it may improve libido and sexual function, particularly in older adults, support testosterone levels (though evidence is mixed), enhance blood flow and circulation, and reduce fatigue, which could indirectly improve sexual energy.

Several mechanisms could theoretically support sexual health. Chronic stress kills libido, and adaptogenic mushrooms like reishi may help manage stress over time. Better overall energy from cordyceps and caffeine could translate to improved sexual energy. Some mushrooms contain compounds that may support blood flow, and the antioxidants in various mushrooms might support overall vascular health, which is important for sexual function.

But here’s the reality check: most claims are based on traditional use in Chinese medicine, small and limited human studies, extrapolation from animal research, and theoretical mechanisms rather than robust clinical evidence. Most “sexual health” benefits from mushroom coffee would likely be indirect — through better energy, reduced stress, and improved overall health rather than direct aphrodisiac effects. The immediate effects you’d notice would primarily be from the caffeine.

And once again, we run into the dosage problem. The studies that suggested Cordyceps might help with sexual function typically used 3,000mg daily of standardized extract for 40 days. Your morning cup of Ryze? You're probably getting somewhere between 50–200mg of Cordyceps extract. That's potentially 15–60 times less than what was used in the studies that showed any benefits. It's like taking a homeopathic dose and expecting pharmaceutical results.

Anti-Inflammatory Properties: Real but Modest

Ryze does contain mushrooms with anti-inflammatory properties, but the actual anti-inflammatory impact is likely modest compared to what marketing might suggest. The mushrooms typically in Ryze do have some research support: Chaga contains betulinic acid and other compounds that show anti-inflammatory effects in lab studies; Reishi has triterpenes and beta-glucans that may reduce inflammatory markers; Lion's Mane contains compounds that may reduce neuroinflammation specifically; Cordyceps shows some promise for modulating inflammatory responses; and Turkey Tail's beta-glucans may have immune-modulating, anti-inflammatory effects.

But let's be realistic about the assessment. The anti-inflammatory effects are likely mild to moderate — not comparable to pharmaceutical anti-inflammatories. They're systemic rather than targeted, meaning they may help with general inflammation rather than specific conditions. The benefits would be cumulative, building over weeks or months of consistent use, not immediate. And they're variable, depending on individual inflammatory status and other lifestyle factors.

There are also limitations when these mushrooms are in coffee form. Mushroom extracts in coffee blends are typically in smaller concentrations than therapeutic doses used in studies. Processing and heat from coffee preparation may affect some compounds. Most research uses concentrated extracts, not coffee blends.

Here's where the rubber meets the road with dosages: studies showing anti-inflammatory benefits from Reishi typically use 1,000–1,500mg of standardized extract daily. Chaga studies often use 300–400mg of concentrated extract. Lion's Mane research generally involves 500–1,000mg daily. Compare that to what's likely in your

cup of Ryze — you're probably getting 25–100mg of each mushroom extract, if that. That's potentially 10–40 times less than the research doses. It's the difference between taking a therapeutic dose and getting a homeopathic sprinkle.

Ryze's anti-inflammatory potential is probably comparable to drinking green tea regularly, taking a modest dose of turmeric, or eating berries frequently. But it's much weaker than prescription anti-inflammatories, high-dose curcumin supplements, or major dietary changes like eliminating processed foods.

The Sleep Promise: Ryze Cocoa's Evening Tale

Ryze Cocoa, their evening and bedtime version, claims to promote 8 hours of quality sleep. This is an oversimplified marketing claim that doesn't account for individual sleep complexity.

The sleep-focused blend probably contains Reishi, which is most studied for sleep benefits and may help reduce time to fall asleep, could improve sleep quality and reduce middle-of-night awakenings, and has compounds that may promote relaxation and reduce stress. It likely also includes Chaga for overall relaxation and stress reduction, and Lion's Mane, which while not directly sedating, may support overall nervous system health.

The potential sleep mechanisms include stress reduction, as adaptogenic mushrooms may help lower cortisol and stress hormones that interfere with sleep. Some compounds may have mild calming effects on the nervous system. And there's a ritual benefit — having a warm, comforting bedtime drink can signal sleep time to your brain.

But here's why "8 hours" is misleading: sleep duration is highly individual (some need 7 hours, others need 9+). No single food or supplement can guarantee specific sleep duration. Sleep quality matters more than just hitting an arbitrary time target. And underlying sleep disorders, stress, environment, and habits have much bigger impacts.

Realistically, Ryze Cocoa might help you feel more relaxed before bed, potentially reduce sleep onset time slightly, support better sleep quality over time with consistent use, and work best as part of good sleep hygiene practices. What it won't do is override

poor sleep habits, fix underlying sleep disorders, guarantee any specific sleep duration, or work the same for everyone.

And here's the kicker about dosages again: sleep studies with Reishi typically use 1,000–1,500mg of standardized extract taken 30–60 minutes before bedtime. Your evening cup of Ryze Cocoa? You're likely getting maybe 50–150mg of Reishi extract, potentially 10–30 times less than the studied amounts. It's like expecting a prescription sleep aid's effects from a quarter of a children's aspirin.

My Final Take

After diving deep into Ryze's claims and the science behind them, here's what I've concluded: Ryze products contain legitimate functional mushrooms with some research-backed benefits, but many of the marketing claims are exaggerated.

But perhaps the most eye-opening discovery in my investigation was the dosage gap. This is something that should be printed in bold on every mushroom coffee package, but of course it isn't. The amounts of mushroom extracts that showed benefits in studies are typically 10–60 times higher than what you're getting in your daily cup of Ryze. We're talking about the difference between therapeutic doses and what amounts to nutritional pixie dust.

For perspective, if studies used 1,000–3,000mg of an extract to show benefits, and you're getting 50–150mg in your coffee, you'd need to drink 7–20 cups daily to match the research dose. At that point, you'd be vibrating from caffeine long before you felt any mushroom benefits. It's like expecting the effects of a full-strength ibuprofen when you're taking a baby aspirin.

Ryze may be a pleasant part of a bedtime routine that could modestly support sleep quality, but promising "8 hours of sleep" is classic supplement marketing overreach. Good sleep comes from addressing the fundamentals: consistent schedule, sleep environment, stress management, and underlying health issues. The same goes for all their other claims.

What Ryze can realistically offer is a pleasant, lower-caffeine coffee alternative with modest energy support and potentially less jittery effects. It provides genuine but mild anti-inflammatory properties, possible stress reduction and sleep support over time, and a way to incorporate functional mushrooms into your routine.

What it cannot do is provide miraculous weight loss, replace medical treatments, guarantee specific health outcomes, or work the same for everyone. As I learned with my Parkinson's journey, what works is my doctor prescribing medications and lots of exercise, sleep and healthy foods. Go figure.

For those interested in functional mushrooms, Ryze products may be a reasonable way to explore their potential benefits. But it's important to have realistic expectations and understand that the most dramatic health benefits come from fundamental lifestyle factors. The key is viewing products like Ryze as potential supportive tools rather than magic solutions for health and wellness goals.

The Bigger Picture: When Supplements Become Snake Oil

The claims that Ryze makes is part of a much larger problem in our current health landscape. We're living in an era of supplement overreach, where products that aren't required to prove their efficacy are being marketed as health solutions with the same confidence as proven medical treatments.

Here's what most people don't realize: supplements like Ryze operate in a regulatory gray area. Unlike pharmaceuticals, they don't have to prove they work before hitting the market. The FDA only requires that supplement companies ensure their products are "generally recognized as safe" and that their labels are accurate. They don't have to demonstrate effectiveness, and they can make structure and function claims without the rigorous testing required for drugs.

This matters more than ever because we're seeing influential figures promote supplements with almost religious fervor. Robert F. Kennedy Jr., who may soon hold significant influence over health policy, has long championed supplements and alternative medicine approaches. His wife, Cheryl Hines, has promoted various wellness

products and supplements. When public figures with potential policy influence push unregulated products, it creates a perfect storm of marketing hype meeting political authority.

The danger isn't that supplements are inherently harmful — many aren't. The danger is that people are being led to believe these products can replace proven medical treatments or provide dramatic health benefits that simply aren't supported by evidence. When someone with political influence suggests that supplements are preferable to conventional medicine, vulnerable people may delay or avoid necessary medical care.

We need to be especially careful in this environment. Critical thinking about health claims has never been more important. Ask yourself: Are the dosages meaningful? Is the company transparent about their ingredients? Are they making claims that sound too good to be true? Are they using the classic supplement marketing playbook of customer testimonials instead of peer-reviewed research?

The supplement industry is worth over $150 billion annually, and much of that success comes from marketing products that promise more than they can deliver. Companies have learned that they can make impressive-sounding claims, cite preliminary research, and count on consumers not to dig deeper into the actual evidence.

My advice? Treat supplement claims the same way you'd treat a used car salesman's pitch. Be skeptical, ask for proof, and remember that if something sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Your health is too important to base on marketing hype, celebrity endorsements, or political rhetoric.

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